

THE REMARKABLE

19492

L I F E

O F

JAMES SMITH

A Famous Young HIGHWAYMAN,

Who was EXECUTED at

Surbiton-Common, near Kingston upon Thames, on Thursday, the 9th Day of September, 1756, for a Robbery in Surrey.

CONTAINING

A True and Faithful NARRATIVE

OF ALL THE

Robberies that He has, within a few Years, Committed in *London*, and in the Country, amounting to One Hundred and Six in Number, although he was not Twenty-two Years of Age when he suffered.

Written by HIMSELF, whilst under Sentence of Death in the Gaol at Kingston: And delivered to Mr. JOHN HAMMETT, Keeper of the County Gaol of SURREY. Together with his SERIOUS REFLECTIONS on a FUTURE STATE, and several LETTERS, particularly One from a METHODIST TEACHER, &c.

And to this PAPER is annex'd

The DYING WORDS of JOHN LAUDER, Esq;

Who was Executed at *Pennenden-Heath, near Maidstone*, in the County of *Kent*, on Monday, the 16th of August, 1756, for the Murder of *William Brown*, a Post-Boy.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DAVIS, the Corner of Sackville-Street, Piccadilly; and M. COOPER, in Paternoster-Row. [Price Six-pence.]

A G E N U I N E
NARRATIVE of the LIFE and TRANSACTIONS of JAMES SMITH, &c.

AT the session of Oyer and Terminer, and general gaol-delivery for the county of Surry, held at Kingston-upon-Thames, in and for the said county, on Thursday the 19th day of August, 1756, six men were capitally convicted, and received judgment of death, viz. Andrew Ridge, for privately stealing; Michael Davis, Moses Joseph, (both Jews) and Wm. Jones for felony and burglary; and James Smith and Thomas Dalton, otherwise Plum, for a robbery on the king's highway: of these six malefactors, five were reprieved, and I James Smith only ordered for execution on Surbiton-common near Kingston.

Dalton and I were indicted for assaulting Mariana Bromfield on the highway, putting her in fear of her life, forcibly and against her will taking from her a silk purse, and six shillings in silver, &c. and on this indictment we were by our country found guilty. I have seen a copy of one of the trials, but that is so incorrectly and scandalously printed, that I shall not trouble myself about it; for my design is, in the following pages, to give a true narrative of what concerns myself, &c.

I, JAMES SMITH, the son of a freeholder at Abingdon, Berks, am near 22 years of age; I was born in the city of Oxford, had a very good education bestowed upon me, and in all respects brought up like a gentleman: my father, when I was at a proper age, was willing that I should go to a trade, for he used to tell me, if I had two thousand pounds a year I should spend it, and then starve; because I was so wild,

and spent too much money upon play-things, and lost it at sport, as most school-boys do; for I am certain I spent four shillings every week when I was no more than nine years old; so you may easily imagine what expence my parents were at, for I was then at a grammar-school, which was likewise a boarding-school, and here I remained till I was upwards of 13 years of age; tho' before I was 11 years old my father allowed me 5s. 6d. a week for pocket-money; so that my father, finding I spent my money at such a rate, determined that I should go to a trade; for he said that I might spend a fortune, but I could not spend a trade very well. At 14 years of age I was put an apprentice to a very genteel trade; my master was a freeman of the city of London, and used me more like his own child than an apprentice. Before I had served one year of my time, my father allowed me 10s. every week for pocket-money, which was the ruin of me; beside this, I had two shillings or half a crown a week from my master: I had saved up 5l. 14s. and then, unhappily for me, I began to think of visiting the ladies of the town; and in the second year of my apprenticeship, in 1751, on a lord's day in the evening, I took a coach with a young gentleman, a rake of the town, and ordered the coachman to drive us to the Dorsetshire beer-house in the Strand, where we had a half crown bowl of punch, which we drank, and then withdrew to a certain bagnio under the piazzas in Covent-garden, where each had a young lady for the whole night; when I arose in the morning I found I had not a single shilling left out of all my money

money that I carried out, which, as I before observed, was 5 l. 14 s: but, notwithstanding this, my lady was so generous as to treat me with a dish of chocolate for breakfast, and, in return for her civility, I promised to take her out in a chaise the Sunday morning following, and was as good as my word, being myself too much addicted to pleasure, and gadding abroad with idle and rakish company.

I took her to Windsor-forest, where we regaled all day, lay there that night, and returned to London next day about noon; I could not be contented with this lady, for I soon fix'd my affections on another miss, who I thought far more handsome and delicate, and thus I spent my father's money in a most extravagant and scandalous manner. I had so sincere a respect for this young woman, that she never asked me any favours but they were readily granted: I took genteel lodgings for her, and we cohabited together upwards of twenty months; and in April, 1752, about a month after I had taken these lodgings for my lady, my aunt died, and left me 300 pounds, which I was not to receive till I was 21 years of age; but being recommended to a person who lends money on high interest, he advanced me 50 l. immediately; I then took my lady to a mercer's shop, and bought her three new gowns, and she appeared very grand, having a footman and maid-servant to attend her; but I was seldom more than three nights in the week with her, beside all day on Sunday, and then we generally went out in a chaise, with the footman to attend us: the 50 l. that was taken up lasted us only a fortnight, but I drew for 100 l. more, and then had but 100 l. coming to me, for all the rest was sunk in interest; and I do assure you that this money was all squandered away in less than six months.—Oh! may unwary and deluded young men, who delight in the company of harlots, read this account with attention, and consider that

you are running headlong to certain destruction and perdition: for as an ancient motto has it,

Learn to be wise from others harms,

And you shall do full well.

My money being all gone, I was in a terrible dilemma what step I must take to support my lady-bird in her grandeur; and, after ruminating a long time, I took to the fatal resolution of turning collector on the king's highway without having a licence for so doing, not considering the consequence of this rash and hazardous attempt: however, I was determined I would sooner loose my life than leave my darling.

Having hired a horse, on the second Sunday in May, 1752, I set out for Finchley-common, with two pistols and a long knife, and attacked two post-chaises, and a one-horse chair, and robbed the passengers (to the best of my recollection) of twenty-three guineas, one gold and a silver watch, one gold and one diamond ring, and a gold snuff-box: I told the last company that I gave the meeting to, that I only robb'd on Sundays, for I thought the better day the better deed: I then returned to London directly, put up my horse, and went to visit my madam, who rallied me pretty soundly, and charged me with keeping company with other women. I excus'd myself, by forging an idle story, and told her I had been to a friend to borrow twenty pounds, and shewing her the cash, she gave me a syren's smile, and every thing appear'd serene and calm: that night I tarried with my fair one, and took my leave the next day, without ever reflecting on what I had done, with a promise to meet her the next evening, which I did not fail to do.

After supper she told me, with a whining and deceitful air, natural to those sort of creatures, that I must oblige her with 20 guineas in a few days, and then I should have her heart for ever. I must confess that this demand a little chagrin'd me, but yet I

was

willing to comply with it, and promised to do every thing in my power to supply her with the cash; at which she seem'd mighty well pleased, and complimented me (in her stile) with being a gentleman possessed of a princely spirit.

I was sensible there was no other way of procuring this money than borrowing a purse on the road; and next morning, having provided myself with a horse, I determined Blackheath should be the scene of action for that day. I had not been long in waiting before a coach and four, with a servant behind, well mounted, presented itself; I was determined to attack it, tho' at the hazard of my life, and accordingly rode up, and gave the word to deliver; in the coach was three ladies and three young gentlemen, who gave me their purses without any hesitation, and I found the contents 73 guineas in gold, 26 s. in silver; I demanded the gentlemen's watches, which they readily delivered, one of which was gold, and the others silver, and of the ladies I had two diamond rings, besides their money. I then rode away with the greatest expedition, but before I got off the heath I heard some horsemen coming along as fast as they could drive; and turning round I perceived three footmen, with a great number of countrymen, who I justly apprehended were in pursuit after me: I then set spurs and whip to my nag, and struck directly thro' Greenwich, and between Greenwich and Deptford I leap'd over a hedge into a field, at the end of which was an old barn, where I dismounted, and made my horse fast, and then came up to the hedge again, and laid myself down at the bottom of it; and in a short time came by my pursuers, who, by this time, were ten or twelve horsemen; but they were so hot in their pursuit, that they rode by me, saying, D—mn him, he could take no other road but this.

In this place I lay perdieu for near two hours; when, very luckily for me, I per-

ceived a returned post-chaise going for London, and before it came up, I got my nag out of the field into the road, and when the post-boy came up, I pretended to be taken so ill that I could not ride my horse, and desired the boy would put halter upon him, make him fast behind the chaise, and put the saddle and bridle into it, which he did, I having first got into it, and then he drove for London.

When we came to Kent-street end, I got out of the chaise, gave the driver half a crown, mounted my horse, and made for St. George's fields, and so over Westminster-bridge, at which place I put up my horse, and then went directly to my spouse, who received me with complaisance, but not till I told her that I had been with my uncle, and had borrowed fifty guineas of him, greatest part of which should be at her service, as I had no other view in the world but making her easy and happy.

This evening we both took an airing in a chaise as far as the Flask at Hampstead, and returned to town the next day; and the Friday following I went to Smithfield-market, and bought a fine gelding, which cost me 15 guineas, and I kept it at a livery-stable, for which I paid eight shillings weekly.

This was in the month of May, 1753, in the seventeenth year of my age; but the first robbery I did was in my sixteenth year, in 1752, and then I robbed a chariot on Hounslow-Heath, and took from the gentleman and lady three guineas, 5 s. 6 d. in silver, and a silver watch. This was when I kept company with the former lady; but as soon as I left her, I took up with the latter, and proceeded as you see in the foregoing lines. The next robbery I committed was on Cambridge-Heath, on a single gentleman, of whom I took 8 l. 17 s. and a silver watch, and rode gently off; this was in July 1753, after the Black-Heath affair, with my own gelding; and the next robbery I committed was in August 1753, on

on Hounslow-Heath, in Belfond Road from London, where I robbed two single-horse chaises, and a four-wheel chaise, one after another, and took in the whole 6 guineas in gold and 34 s. in silver, two silver watches and a gold ring. I then retired to April 1754, and rode to Maidenhead-Thicket, where I robbed a coach and six with two footmen behind, and took from the two gentlemen and two ladies 91 guineas in gold and 3 s. in silver, and a gold watch, but 2 s. I gave to the coachman, and 1 s. to a traveller who ask'd charity of me, and then rode to Staines-Common, where I robbed a tanner in Long-lane as he was coming over the Common of 100l. and upwards. I was then genteelly dressed in blue plush with plate buttons, and a jockeys cap, and rode off with ease. When I got home I found I had made a fine prize, and laid out of my master's house every night.

About this time there was a lottery, and I bought a ticket which cost me 3 guineas, and after it was drawn a blank, I sold it to a particular friend of mine, with whom I had lost many a pound at gaming; I sold him this ticket for 3 l. 7 s. and told him that I should have a letter sent me when it was drawn, and I would send him an answer as soon as I received it; but as I knew it was drawn a blank before, and then I got a blank printed letter, and fill'd it up as if it had come from the lottery-office that night, and it acquainted him that it was drawn a blank that afternoon, when I well knew it to have been drawn four days before.

Of this fraudulent transaction my master was informed, and he told me very ingenuously that he was fully convinced that I was a wicked young knave, and I should abide no longer under his roof; so, by mutual agreement, he was so kind as to give me up my indenture, and discharge me from any further service.

After this I went into the country to visit my father; but I was not idle in my jour-

ney, for I robb'd the Oxford stage-coach, a post-chaise, &c. and got 44 guineas, three watches, and some silver, and got safe off with my booty. When I came to my father's house, he asked me the meaning of my parting from my master; I told him several idle stories; but at last a letter that my master sent down to my father laid me out just as I deserved, and painted me in my true colours.

This letter acquainted my father, that I went on in a very bad manner; that I lay out four nights in the week; that I kept a horse of my own, and was suspected of robbing on the highway, &c. This account of me distracted my poor father's mind, and melted him into tears; and he told me he was determined that I should tarry at home with him as long as he lived. I did not at all like this proposal, so told him I was very willing to go to sea, which he approved of, and commended me for having that thought, as my absence would make me forget all my wicked companions.

After I had been with my father three months, one of his acquaintance, a midshipman of a king's ship, promised to be my friend: in a few days this gentleman set out from our town for London; and I was so artful to forge a letter, as if it came from the midshipman to my father, to acquaint him that a good birth was procured for me; and I must be in London the next night without fail; I had put a counterfeit postmark to the letter, and gave it to the postman, as he was delivering out his letters in town, telling him he must carry it to my father, and he would pay the postage: the man did so, without in the least suspecting any fraud. When I came home, my father presented me the letter, and said, Son, are you willing to go? I reply'd, Yes, dear father, by all means, and the sooner the better. The old gentleman was overjoy'd, and went immediately and took a place for

me in the stage-coach, which was to set out early the next morning for London, saying I should not be disappointed, as the gentleman was so earnest to have me with him.

The next morning I set out in the stage, after having taken leave of my dear father, who then gave me five guineas, and told me I should want for nothing that was in his power to give me: at parting we both shed tears plentifully.—I must confess, that putting this trick upon my poor father, has given me a good deal of uneasiness since I have been under my misfortunes.

When I got to town I never troubled myself about my birth on board the man of war, but went to visit my old haunts, and pay my respects to my old doxies in Covent-garden, among whom I spent all my money in two days and nights. I then apply'd to a gentleman for business, where I work'd about 18 months, and might have liv'd very comfortably; but my strong inclination to villany I could by no means get the better of: for then, almost every Sunday, I rode out and robb'd greatly about Maidenhead-thicket, on Hounslow-heath near the powder-mills, on Wimbledon and Putney-commons, Epping-forest, Finchley-common, Bow, Stratford, and almost every part about London. 'Tis impossible for me to give the particulars of all my robberies; but to the best of my belief and remembrance, I am confident I have committed 106, including that I die for.

At last I scrap'd acquaintance with Dalton and Peters (the evidence) at a tavern in Katharine-street in the Strand, and by keeping of their company I never went home to my lodgings till three or four o'clock in the morning: one night we fell into discourse about riding, and the well managing of a horse; on which both Dalton and Peters said, they wish'd they were well mounted, and on Hounslow-heath; I smil'd, and said I would take a ride with them with all my heart; and in a short time we all three a-

greed to take the road together, and swore fidelity to each other.

However, I determin'd within myself to guard against my new companions, being fearful they should betray me; and told 'em in plain English, that if either of them offer'd to impeach, if we should be had before a magistrate, I would blow his brainpan open. My companions promised me they would be true and faithful, but woe-full experience has taught me the contrary: I really believe that Peters and Dalton had been on the road before my acquaintance with them.

The first robbery we committed was in Berkeley-square, where we robbed a French gentleman just come from some gaming-table in Covent-garden; I stopt the chairmen, who began to be resolute, but we soon silenced them, and robb'd the gentleman of his gold watch, three guineas, and 6 s. 6 d. in silver, and went home for that night: this was the Thursday before Whitsun-sunday.

At this time both Dalton and Peters were out of place, tho' they then kept company with the ladies of Covent-garden; they press'd me to go out with them every night, but I excus'd myself till the Sunday following, when we all set out for Epsom; and on our return in the evening, near Vauxhall, as we came jogging along, I said to Dalton, 'Tom, I hear the found of some coaches before us, let's touch them.' We then whipp'd up with all speed, but before we overtook them, they had got beyond the Dog-and-Duck in St. George's-fields; we pass'd them, but I soon turn'd back, and immediately stopt the coach-and-four, with two servants behind; I went up to the coach-door, but I found they held it, and I told the footmen if they advanc'd an inch, or offer'd to do any thing, they were dead men; I perceived a gentleman getting out out at the other door of the coach, with his sword drawn, on which I broke the glass

with the but-end of my pistol, and put the muzzle into the coach, threatening to shoot them dead if they did not surrender; my two companions then came up, and we robb'd the company of a metal watch, a patch-box chas'd with gold, a 36 s. piece, and 6 s. 6 d. in silver. We then made the best of our way over London-bridge, and at the Swan tavern in Finch-lane, Cornhill, drank a bottle of wine, purposing to change our 36 s. piece, but they refused to take it, it appearing to be a light one, and wanted 5 s. 6 d. of weight. We then took coach, and was set down at the end of Exeter-street in the Strand, and went into every lewd house in that neighbourhood, thinking to get the piece changed, but it would not do, tho' we spent 4 l. 13 s. in endeavouring to put it off.

Dalton left us, and Peters and I went to a night-house, and offered it again for change, and here we were stop't for putting off bad money; on this Peters began to whindle, and said he should be hang'd: I told him if we kept our own counsel no one could hurt us, for I'll take the whole upon myself, and you may say you met me in Covent-garden, and we were going to drink together; but this did not appease Peters, for he seemed to be under a very great terror, but I was not in the least concerned about the matter.

We were had before justice Fielding, in order to be examined, and I told his worship that I had received a sum of money out of the country from my father, and that this piece came among it; which story past off very well at that time: but, on our second examination, the justice call'd me aside, and ask'd me several questions; but I was determined to confess nothing, and gave his worship very shuffling and evasive answers. I was then put out of the room, and Peters ordered in, and in a short time after two men that were at the justice's took hold of my arms and led me into the room again,

where I was searched, and a pair of pistols taken out of my breeches; on which they instantly hand-cuff'd me, and carried me to New-prison.

Poor Dalton was soon taken, and I being sent for from New-prison, we were examined, and, after a long examination, both committed to Newgate, and the Evidence Peters committed to Clerkenwell bridewell, in order to give his testimony against us on our trials.

After lying in the dismal prison of Newgate from May to August, we were remov'd by a writ of Habeas Corpus from thence to the New-goal in the borough of Southwark, to take our trials at Kingston assizes, the robbery being committed in the county of Surry.

On Thursday, the 19th day of August we were, with forty other prisoners, carried in waggons to Kingston prison; and the next day in the evening we both took our trials, and were cast for our lives, the evidence being very full and plain against us. I had several gentlemen of reputation to speak in my behalf, but the proof against me appearing so strong, my character did me but very little service.

On Tuesday, the 23d of August, Dalton and myself, with four other convicts, were brought to the bar to receive sentence of death; but before the judge left the town, he was pleased to reprieve my companion, Thomas Dalton, and the four others (two of whom were Jews) and ordered me for execution. I am glad that poor Dalton had his life saved, and hope he will become a new man.

P. S. I forgot to mention the robbery on the earl of Hume in Berkeley-square, and several others that I committed thereabouts. It has, since my conviction, been reported that I have been twice try'd for the highway, but this is false and groundless.

JAMES SMITH.
Whilst

Whilst I have been under sentence of death in this prison of Kingston, the Almighty has awakened me with a true sense of my melancholly condition, glory be to his holy name for it. The worthy divine, who has been so good and charitable as to assist me with spiritual advice in these my last moments, I cannot too sufficiently thank; if the prayers of a poor sinner can avail any thing (and I trust in God they will) that reverend gentleman has mine with a true sincerity: may God Almighty reward him with a crown of glory in recompence for the pains he has taken to reclaim a poor miserable sinner.

Some unthinking people may imagine I mispent too much of my precious time that the law indulged me with to make a preparation for death, in writing an account of my robberies, &c. but I dare hope I have made a proper use of the few hours allotted me for a much better and solemn purpose. My sentiments, regarding my Future State, are these: I believe in the Holy Trinity, and hope that God Almighty will pardon my sins through the merits and intercession of Our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

When we first come into the world, we learn both the hardness of a vicious heart, in that nothing can pierce it but affliction; and also the blindness and folly of men, who passionately desire prosperity; together with the great usefulness of affliction: and from all those, that it proceeds not from harshness and severity of God, that he sends calamities upon the sons of men; but there is an illustrious instance of his wisdom, and of his goodness, in those providential dispensations, since this is the only way of recovering and making men both good and happy.

I well let you know in somewhat particularly, what are the considerations that I entertain my thoughts upon in this my afflicted condition; and consulting the right, and carrying along with me a just notion of the

nature of the case, you shall find these reducible to a very few points.

I consider what the condition was I am fallen from, and how happy I might have remained had it not been for my own folly; how many hired servants of my father have liberty and happiness, and I to die upon a tree; I that am pinch'd with want now felt none in my father's house; I was liberally maintained, honourably treated, wanted nothing but wisdom to understand my own felicity, and in this condition I might have continued: for neither did my father's estate complain of the burden of my accommodations, nor was he strait-handed, or abated any thing of his fatherly affections towards me: it was nothing but my own folly that ruined me.

I really deplore the sad estate I am fallen into; when I set out from my father's house, in quest of liberty, did I ever dream of becoming a slave, a dying malefactor: when I despised the liberal provisions of his family, did I, or could I have thought I should come to want liberty, and to hang upon a tree? how sad is the change! how severe is my fate! which I know no more how to bear than how to avoid: but that's not the worst yet, for I plainly foresee what is like to be the issue of this.

It is not only hanging upon a tree, but I perish for want of mercy from the Almighty, I have a prospect of nothing but death before me in the case I am in; I am lost, undone, undone in the most dreadful circumstances; for I perish, and it's with sins; and death makes its sure approaches, and in the most ghastly shape:

Vivens vidensque pereo.

I see and feel myself a dying.

But yet I have a firm hope in God's mercies, if I be a true penitent, as I hope I am, (and God grant my hopes may be well grounded) that his glorious majesty will in the abundance of his mercy save my soul alive; sure I was made in his image, and placed

placed under the eye of his providence; I was lord of the lower, and favourite of the upper world, as if one was made on purpose to exercise and divert me, and the other to receive and reward me.

I have a nature capable of immortality, and had eternal Life designed for me, as the inheritance of a son, and my task of obedience was as easy and honourable as my hopes were glorious. For I had no hard task laid upon me; nothing required of me but was proportionable to my powers, and agreeable to the reason of my mind; no restraint was laid upon my passions, but such as was evidently both necessary for the world, and good for myself; that it could not be drawn into an argument of harshness and severity in God, nor make apology for my transgression. All my faculties were whole and entire; I was neither tempted by necessity, nor oppressed by any fate; I was therefore happy enough, but now I am miserable indeed! God Almighty give me strength to bear this hard trial.

It is no very rare thing to observe men dissolve into tears, and weep as heartily over their old sins, as ancient friends do when there is a necessity of parting; and yet (like them) wish and hope to meet and enjoy each other again. Therefore as we see the formerly dissolute, but relenting son, contents not himself with passionate expressions, or ineffective wishes, but resolves upon action: I will arise and go to my devotion, and will say unto the Almighty God, I have sinned against Heaven, and before Thee. So a true penitent sinner, that is in earnest to save his soul, sits not down under a dosing melancholy, pleases not himself with wishing and complaining; spends not his time in doubting and disputing, but puts himself forward upon the business. For (saith I) whilst I sit still time passes away; life runs out a-pace, and death and judgment are coming on; wherefore some speedy course must be taken, and there

is but one way that affords any hope, which is that of real reformation in which case, no deliberations shall hold me longer in suspense; no sloth shall benumb me; nothing shall tempt me to delay any longer: I am resolved I will make the experiment of becoming a new man from an old sinner; and upon these terms I will cast myself upon God's mercy; and if I perish, I perish!

Kingston, Aug. 30,

1756.

J. SMITH.

A LETTER from James Smith to Thomas Dalton (his companion) now a prisoner in the New Gaol in the borough of Southwark.

Dear Tom,

I Am extremely glad and highly pleased that you are reprieved, altho' I shall suffer for both of you, when we were equally guilty alike; therefore I put my Trust in the Almighty, and I hope he will receive my Soul; for since you have left me I have greatly endeavoured to make myself a Christian fitting to receive the dreadful Day, and I hope the glorious Day: Therefore, dear Tom, I humbly beg you will behave yourself as a Man, and prepare yourself as a Christian, for your Time may be shorter than mine, as all of us are under Sentence of Death by the Almighty; all the Difference is, that mine is limited by Man. And I humbly beg you will consider within yourself what you have offended God in, and your Country; repent upon that Thought, and take the Advice of

Your dying Friend, and
humble Servant,

James Smith.

P. S. I saw Mr. Martin, the Blacksmith, and he told me that you had sent me a Letter; but this is to let you know that I never received one, but beg you will let me know how you do.

The following is the Answer of Thomas Dalton, to James Smith's Letter.

Dear James,

I Am very proud to hear you are in such a good Way of thinking, and I am very highly pleased with your Advice, and I hope if you should die, it will be a joyful Day to you; and you know we must all die one Day or another, so that I hope we shall meet in Paradise. I wrote to your Sister yesterday, and I had an Answer from her that she would be with you to-day, and when she comes I desire you will not be put aside from your Devotion with being led up with any Thoughts of a Reprieve; and as you think you have made your Peace with God, I hope you will continue it, and take the Advice of your ever-loving and sincere Friend till Death,

Thomas Dalton.

P. S. I hope your Sister and I shall be Friends as long as we both live, upon your Account. George Smith gives his Love to you, and all the Prisoners.

A Second LETTER from James Smith to Thomas Dalton.

Dear Tom,

I Have received yours with great Joy, and there you seem to have Hopes that you shall meet me in Paradise; but this is to inform you that you must not only hope, but you must do your utmost Endeavours for to prepare yourself for that Hope; for it is not only saying, I hope God will forgive me my Sins but you must put your whole Trust in the Almighty with a sincere Heart, and entirely resign yourself to God, and if you have not the Sincerity, pray to God for to penetrate into your Heart a sincere Mind; likewise pray to God Day and Night for Our Saviour to be your Guard, that you should not

be tempted by the Devil, nor his Works; and pray don't be buoyed up with the Pleasures of this World, but endeavour for to enjoy the Pleasures of Heaven; for God says, you must despise all the Pleasures upon Earth, and prepare ourselves for his Throne: Therefore, dear Tom, I humbly beg you will make a Confession to God of all your Sins, and look towards him with a stedfast and sincere Heart; but if you do not, and flatter the Almighty, it is making bad worse, and utterly destroying your poor Soul, and then there is no Redemption for it. Dear Tom, I beg you will think of what you have gone through, and if you have not the Sense to know, pray to God to endue you with that Knowledge, and then repent with a sincere Heart: So I beg that you, and all Youth in general, will follow this my Advice, and take Warning by my unhappy Fate.

From your dying Friend, and

true Companion,

James Smith.

Kingston, Sept. 8, 1756.

P. S. Pray give my Love to George Smith, and all the Prisoners, and desire them for to mend their Lives. My Love to Mr. Fowler, Mr. French, and all the Debtors.

The following LETTER James Smith received from a Gentleman a (Methodist Teacher) who used frequently to read prayers and exhortations to the prisoners in the New gaol, Southwark, when James Smith was confined there.

Mr. Smith,

I Saw the Letter you sent Mr. Dalton, and was glad to hear you had a Desire for the Salvation of your Soul. I see nothing

thing is impossible with God. When I saw your Behaviour when the Word was preach'd in the New-Goal, I was afraid your Heart was hardened against God, and the Things that made for your Peace; but I find God, who is rich in Mercy, hath not as yet given you over to a reprobate Mind according to your Deserts, but is still crying, why will ye die, even to your Soul; this, indeed, is a Wonder of Grace, especially since the God that is thus working with you is him that saw you in all your Evils, even in those secret Sins that you little thought any saw, yea those Sins that passed in your Heart that never was brought to Action (you remember some of them now you are reading, I doubt not) these, yea all those are filed against you in the Book of God, and must condemn you in that Day, for thus saith his Word, Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things to fulfill the Law. Now, my Friend, how wilt thou escape the Damnation of Hell if thou see thyself thus laid open before God with all thy Sins, and see thyself condemned justly thereby; there is a Way found out whereby thou, even thou, the chiefest of Sinners, may be saved; for there is Help laid upon one that is mighty to save, even Jesus, who shall save his People from the Guilt and Power of their Sins, and thou mayest be one of them that he doth save here from Sin, and hereafter from the Consequence of Sin, from eternal Punishment, into the glorious Liberty of the Son of God, to bask in the bright Beam of his Glory for ever. Now if you behold no Way to escape because you have broke the righteous Law of God, and thereby have incurred his Wrath, and expect it to be revealed, Jesus Christ hath fulfilled the Law, and by his Death hath satisfied his Father's Justice, and is now seated in Glory to justify all those that come believing in him, or depending on his fulfilling the Law and satisfying Justice for them, such cannot be condemned, for thus

saith the Word, there is no Condemnation for them that be in Christ Jesus, or depend or trust in his Merit alone for their Salvation; so that you may now see what you could not do (being full of Sin and Guilt) to fulfill a righteous Law that Christ hath done for, and by his Death appeased divine Justice for you, if you rely on him that justifieth you who are ungodly, who never could have appeased it; so that you see if you had any Works (which you have not) this could be no Part of your Acceptance with God; the Whole is wrought out by Christ; and whosoever believeth in him is passed from Death unto Life; now if the Spirit of Christ begin to work in you its first Fruits, which is to convince you of Sin, to discover to you the miserable State Sin hath brought you to in offending your God, thank God for this, and rest not crying to him that is mighty to save till that same Spirit hath convinced you of Righteousness, that you have Redemption in his Blood, the Forgiveness of your Sins, then will you be enabled to rejoice even in Death, then will you be able to testify to all about you that you are passed from Death unto Life, and that when he who is your Life shall appear, you shall appear with him in Glory: This is purchased for you, this Liberty, and if you find it not before you go hence, it would be better you never had been born; therefore employ your few Minutes in search for it, and thou shalt see the Salvation of our God before thou go hence, and triumph therein; expect it every Moment, for he that seeketh findeth, God grant it may be thy Lot.

Henry Dekan.

The Day of EXECUTION.

BEFORE six in the morning he was fervently at prayers in the condemn'd room,

room, where he remained some time, by his own desire, at his private devotions. He was then had out, and his fetters taken off; and soon after he received the Blessed Sacrament of Our Lord's Last Supper, he behaving with great penitency all the time. When the reverend divine left him, he recommended him to the mercy of God Almighty. About twelve o'clock he was carried to the place of execution; and about ten minutes after one he was turn'd off, he himself giving the order to the executioner to do his office. His corpse was taken care of by an Undertaker, and decently interred that night in Kingston church-yard.

He went to execution with a paper in his hat, on which there was the following written lines.

Mors est rex terrorem.

Death is the king of terrors.

Mors est terribile.

Death is a terrible thing.

Oh! that I should die, and my partner not.—But

Omnium revum vicissitudo.

All things will change in time.

The captain, James Smith, goes first, and and my men will follow after,—as the song says.

The Dying Words of JOHN LAUDER, Esq; who was executed at Pennenden-beath, near Maidstone in Kent, for Murder.

GENTLEMEN,

I Expected to see some gentlemen of the army at this place, to behold this terrible scene, and therefore I shall say something, in a few words.—You see me here under the rod of affliction for all the past errors of my life. I was a soldier, and

behaved well to the satisfaction of my superiors.—But how am I fallen!—You now see me stand here as a dying malefactor, and a murderer. I had no intent to kill this poor lad when we set out from Dartford. I was much intoxicated, and must confess that my violent and excessive passions have hurried me on to my destruction. But, thank Almighty God, I am not yet destroy'd, for I have a confirmed hope that I shall see His glorious face in a very few minutes.—As my crime is unpardonable, I am content to suffer, to expiate for my bloody deed, and satisfy the justice of my country.

You see, Gentlemen, that I am taken off in the bloom of my youth:—I am fully satisfied that I deserve it; and my being in liquor at the time of the commission of this fact, I confess, is a great aggravation of of my crime.

Now, Gentlemen, notice the words of a dying murderer. — Live regular, and gentleman-like, becoming the honourable offices you hold under his present most gracious Majesty: refrain from drunkenness and quarrels; and, I tell you particularly, herding with base women. — We all know the soldiery are too much addicted to this vice. — Pray God grant there may be a speedy amendment, for the sake of their own healths, and the honour of their king and country.

Gentlemen, I can say no more,—God Almighty bless you all, and I earnestly beg your prayers for my departing soul.

At these last words abundance of the spectators wept plentifully. He gave his gold watch to a clergyman of the church of Scotland, who assisted him in his preparation for death. And to the executioner he gave five guineas. His body was deliver'd to the surgeons, to be anatomis'd and dissected, pursuant to act of parliament.

[F I N I S .

